

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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PM-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OMB-01 SP-02 MC-02 IGA-02

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R 301257Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2571

INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 0353

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, NS

SUBJ: POSSIBLE SURINAM PROCUREMENT OF MILITARY HELICOPTERS

REF : PARAMARIBO 0335 (P 271037Z APR 76)

1. REPRESENTATIVE OF H. J. DE VRIES KSANY, AGENT IN SURINAM FOR BELL HELICOPTERS, CALLED ON AMBASSADOR APRIL 29 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE SURINAM PROCUREMENT OF MILITARY HELICOPTERS.

2. AGENT SAID SURINAM ARMY DESIRES TO START ITS AIR ARM WITH HELICOPTERS RATHER THAN FIXED-WING AIRCRAFT. HE BELIEVES ARMY WILL INITIALLY PURCHASE ABOUT THREE MEDIUM-SIZE (14 PASSENGER) AND THREE SMALL SIZE (5 PASSENGER) HELICOPTERS ALONG WITH SUITABLE ARMAMENT IN TERMS OF GUNS AND POSSIBLY AIR TO GROUND MISSILES. AGENT DESIRES OFFER BELL 212 AND JET RANGER AS FITTING SURINAM REQUIREMENTS, WITH FORMER AT APPROXIMATELY US\$1 MILLION EACH AND LATTER US\$300 THOUSAND EACH. FOR TOTAL OF ABOUT US\$4 MILLION. AGENT SAYS HE HAS TELEXED BELL SEVERAL TIMES ASKING FOR AUTHORITY TO MAKE QUOTATIONS BUT HAS RECEIVED NO REPLY. HE SUSPECTS BELL MAY BE WAITING FOR SOME WORD FROM USG ON WHETHER SALE WOULD BE PERMITTED.

3. AGENT SAID FURTHER THAT HELICOPTER PILOT TRAINING WOULD
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HAVE TO BE PART OF PACKAGE, SINCE SURINAM ARMY HAS NO PILOTS

NOW QUALIFIED. IF HELICOPTERS PURCHASED IN US, ARMY WOULD
HOPE FOR TRAINING BY US MILITARY.

4. AGENT SAID AGENTS OF OTHER MANUFACTURERS ARE ALSO
INTERESTED IN THIS PROCUREMENT, ESPECIALLY REPRESENTATIVES
OF FRENCH ALOUETTE. HE ASKED WHETHER EMBASSY COULD CLARIFY
QUESTION OF WHETHER SALE OF BELL MILITARY HELICOPTERS
WOULD BE LICENSED AS WELL AS ARMAMENTS, AND WHETHER PILOT
TRAINING COULD BE ARRANGED IN US, MOST DESIRABLY WITH US
MILITARY PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM. AGENT FEELS HE NEEDS THIS
KIND OF INFO TO BE IN COMPETITIVE POSITION WITH OTHER
MANUFACTURERS. AMBASSADOR SAID EMBASSY HAD NO INFO ON THESE
POINTS BUT THAT NORMAL COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE FOR BELL
TO APPLY FOR EXPORT LICENSE OR OTHERWISE DETERMINE WHETHER
SALE WOULD BE PERMITTED. AS FOR TRAINING, NO INFO EITHER
BUT THIS WOULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY IN EVENT GOS ASKS FOR IT.
NEVERTHELESS, AMBASSADOR AGREED TO REFER QUESTIONS TO
DEPARTMENT, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW FACT THAT AGENT HAD NOT
BEEN ABLE TO GET ANY REPLIES FROM BELL.

5. COMMENT. AS POINTED OUT REFTTEL, BASIC POSITION OF USG
ON SUPPLY OF MILITARY ITEMS TO SURINAM IS PREREQUISITE TO
OUR KNOWING WHETHER TO TRY TO PUSH US SALES OF THIS KIND,
WITH ATTENDANT COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGES BUT ALSO WITH POSSIBLE
DISADVANTAGES OUTLINED REFTTEL.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: INFO ON WHICH TO BASE REPLY TO BELL
AGENT AND ALSO TO SURINAM ARMY IF THIS PROCUREMENT RAISED
BY THEM WITH EMBASSY.
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